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ABSTRACT

The 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's voyage to the Americas has raised a debate over how historians and teachers should portray this moment in history. Some view Columbus as a hero whose courage helped to provide a foundation for modern civilization in the Americas, while others see him as a villain who exploited indigenous people and set the stage for the further destructive acts of the Europeans who followed him. This mock trial designed either as a 3-day introductory activity, or as a 3-day concluding activity asks students in grades 6-12 to evaluate statements drawn from primary and secondary sources to determine whether or not Columbus should be found guilty of crimes against humanity. In addition to the text of the mock trial, the document lists teacher objectives, student objectives, procedures, materials, and extension activities. Five illustrations and a map are provided, as well as a student evaluation assignment. (23 references) (DB)

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You Are There: The Mock Trial of Christopher Columbus

by

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CRADLE
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8/1/91

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TO: CRADLE
FROM: Joel Latman and Cathy Walter
RE: You Are There: The Mock Trial of Christopher Columbus
DATE: 8/1/91

This summer while attending a National History Day Summer Institute entitled, "The Columbus Voyage and It's Legacy." We as members of CRADLE quickly came to the realization that students need to be able to evaluate the know facts concerning the Columbian Expedition and its subsequent exchanges. To accomplish this goal we decided to place Columbus on trial and let the students evaluate and weigh the existing evidence. This mock trial will serve as a "springboard" for teachers to plan and implement classroom activities in commemoration of the Columbian Quincentenary.

For further information we can be contacted at the following:

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Sincerely,

Columbus: Crimes Against Humanity?

RATIONALE:

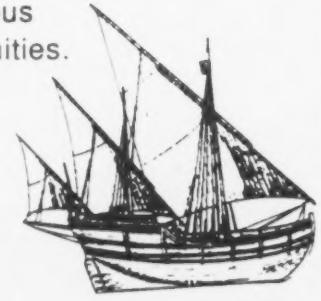
1992 will mark the Columbus Quincentenary, the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage to the western hemisphere. This anniversary has spurred controversary throughout the Americas. Some Americans wish to celebrate while others prefer to commemorate October 12, 1492. Some Americans view Columbus as a hero while others view him as a villian.

History is indeed a complex subject and the Columbian Expedition to the "New World" is no exception. Today students need to be able to distinguish fact from myth and fiction. When viewing Columbus it is important to distinguish whether or not he and those who followed him improved the quality of life in America or destroyed existing civilizations in the western hemisphere. This mock trial activity, designed as either a three day introductory activity, or a three day concluding activity will allow students in grades 6 - 12 to evaluate the facts based upon primary and secondary sources and thus determine whether or not Christopher Columbus should be found guilty of crimes against humanity.

Upon hearing the charges and testimony for and against Columbus, students will be asked to arrive at a verdict.

Role plays have been provided, but the "Prosecution" and "Defense" will be asked to perform additional research to convince the "Jury."

The class will develop their own position paper concerning whether or not a **discovery** occurred, an **encounter** occurred, or an **exchange** took place. The entire class will also discuss how the Columbus Quincentenary should be addressed within their local communities.



The Niña

TEACHER OBJECTIVES:

- students will identify the fact that two distinct hemispheres existed at the time of the Columbian expeditions.
- students will become aware of contributions and failures of the Columbian expedition and those that followed.
- encourage critical thinking and inquiry skills through the use of documents maps, and sketches.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- formulate roles for a mock trial (Synthesis)
- evaluate documents from primary and secondary sources (Evaluation)
- interpret visual exhibts (Analysis)
- survey accomplishements and failures of the Spanish conquistadors and the Spanish missionaries who followed Columbus (Analysis)
- probe the testimonies of both (the Defense and Prosecution) (Analysis)
- discuss the meaning of the phrase "Crimes against humanity" (Comprehension)
- differentiate between **discovery**, **encounter** and **exchange** (Analysis)
- list the exchanges that occurred between the "Old and New World" (Knowledge)
- illustrate through the use of testimony their knowledge of the impact of the Columbian expedition.
- recommend how the Columbian Quincentenary should be addressed within their local community (Evaluation)

PROCEDURE:

1. Contact school and local librarians for source materials to be made available for students.
2. Review with students procedures for interpreting primary source materials such as: sketches, logs, letters and personal testimony and artifacts.
3. Explain to students how to prepare a position paper.
4. Review with students various roles in a mock trial.
5. Assign mock trial parts.
6. Prepare roles for the mock trial.
7. Explain to students courtroom procedures.
8. Conduct the mock trial.
9. Assist students in formulating and preparing their postion papers based upon the outcome of the mock trial.
10. Brainstorm with students ideas concerning how their respective community could address the Columbus Quincentenary.

MATERIALS:

Mock Trial script
Mock Trial props
Mock Trial evidence exhibits

EXTENSION:

- Arrange a field trip to a local trial court to familiarize students with courtroom procedures.
- Invite judges and lawyers to become involved.
- Invite various ethnic groups (Native Americans, Italian Americans and Black Americans) to share their feelings and views concerning the Columbian Quincentenary.

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Columbus: Crimes Against Humanity ?

1992 will mark the quincentenary of Columbus' voyage to the new world. This voyage has been viewed by many Americans with mixed emotions. Many people credit Columbus with opening a "New World" while other people view Columbus' expedition with contempt and remorse. To some Columbus was indeed a hero, to others he was a villian.

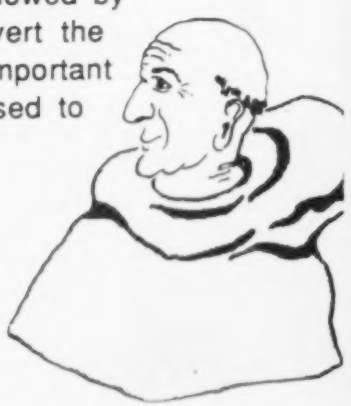
Your task is to evaluate the facts, as history presents them and reach a fair verdict. Does historical data support Columbus' innocences or should Columbus be convicted of the charge, crimes against humanity?

Issues:

1.
Christopher Columbus first set sail for Asia in 1492, but he landed in a strange and different place. For the most part Columbus was economically motivated. Upon arrival in this strange "new land" Columbus proceeded to exploit the natives. Exploitation took many forms. Natives to this "New World" were exposed to many of the "Old World" vices.

2.
Christopher Columbus' voyages eventually resulted in the death of nearly 90 million "Indians". Following Columbus to the new world were Spanish conquistadors who used superior European technology to force Native Americans to fill the Spanish coffers with gold and silver. Death and destruction were the "calling cards" of these emmissaries of Spain.

3.
Christopher Columbus' voyage to the "New World" benefitted native Americans in numerous ways. Native Americans were provided with an opportunity to be converted to Christianity. No longer would they be considered savages. Jesuits missionaries were soon followed by Franciscan missionaries whose major objective was to convert the Amerindians to Catholism. After all, what could be more important than worshipping Christ? Native Americans were also exposed to new technologies that would improve their daily lives.



ISSUES CONTINUED

4.

Soon after Columbus' expedition to the western hemisphere, other European nations began to extract the wealth from the "New World." Mineral wealth at first was the main objective of both the Spanish and Portuguese explorers. Gold and silver was found in limited quantities. Thus agriculture, particularly the cultivation of sugar cane proved to be very profitable. Sugar production brought about the use of slave labor because Native Americans were not familiar with this form of work. Thus, Spain imported slaves from Africa. (Slavery in Africa was quite different from the form of slavery in the Americas). If slaves transported from Africa did not die during their journey across the Atlantic, they often times died while working on the sugar plantations.

Prosecution's Opening Statements:

Defense's Opening Statements:
These opening statements are to be formulated by student participants in this mock trial activity.

Prosecution
Witness #1 Mr. Peter Martyr, First Historian of the New World

I sailed with Captain General Christopher Columbus on his first voyage to the "New World" in 1492". Our captain commented how easy it was for Spanish sailors "never to do a hand's turn of work in the "new world". He also stated that "God had provided docile natives to labor for the lords of creation" . Our Captain, later to be given the title "Admiral of the Ocean Seas", made the following statement: " How easy it would be to convert these people - and to make them work for us. In other words we could enslave them and yet save their souls."
Exhibit #1 (Extent of Spanish expansion) The Spanish Borderlands Frontier 1513-1821. By John Francis Bannon Pg. 4.

Defense Cross Examine

Prosecution
Witness # 2 De Torres, Interpreter on Columbus' first voyage

Upon arriving in the New World we soon encountered a group of natives who we called the Tainos. These naked natives introduced a indigenous plant to us. They referred to this plant as "*tobacos*". Soon we were engaging in the native custom of smoking this "*tobacos*" in the form of cigars. Upon our return to Spain this custom spread rapidly. Not only did Spanish citizens take up smoking, but it soon became popular throughout Europe, Asia and Africa.

Defense Cross Examine

Prosecution
Witness # 3 (Amerindian)

Beginning with his second voyage in 1493, Columbus set islanders (Native Americans) to panning grains of gold from their rivers. (Amerindians were confused about the Spanish desire for gold as an object in itself, since it was not their medium of exchange.) Every three months, each member of my tribe fourteen years or older had to bring to the forts a small bell filled with gold dust. In exchange, they had hung around their necks a copper token, stamped with the date. Anyone caught without an updated token had his or her hands caught off as punishment.

The Prosecution would also like to present **Exhibit #2** as evidence of the inhuman treatment Amerindians received.

Exhibit #2 (sketch from the Bibliotheque Nationale-Madrid)

Defense Cross Examine

Prosecution
Witness #4 Father Diego

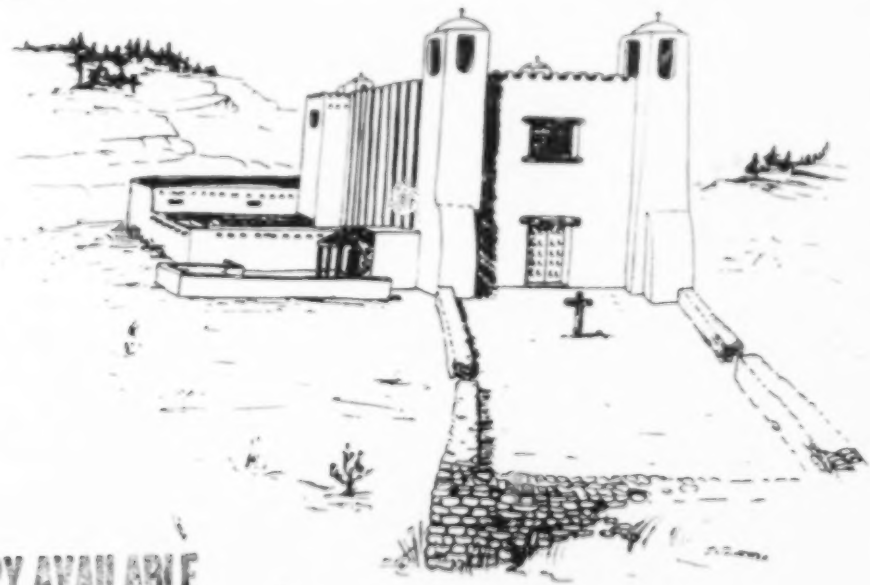
Soon after Columbus' voyage, the Church became actively involved in the conversion of Amerindians to Catholism. Yes, thousands were baptized by the friars and taught the rituals of the new religion. It is said that in a single year (1537) more than 500,000 were baptized, and that the Franciscans baptized, during the first eight years of their active work not less than 1,000,000. But the process of civilization was too severe, and the treatment received at the hands of the dominant race to oppressive, to make rapid progress in the arts of civilized life possible; and the number of natives decreased rapidly under the treatment of the conquerors.
Exhibit #3 (Converting the Indians - The Spanish Borderlands Frontier 1513-1821. By John Francis Bannon. Pg. 74.

Defense Cross Examine

Prosecution
Witness #5 Black Slave

Even after the crown made enslavement illegal in 1570, the practice continued under a variety of legal guises. But Indian slavery was not a possible long term solution. Labor shortages were due to the deaths of Indians. The Portuguese began to enslave Africans in the sugar industry that was emerging in the "New World. "

Defense Cross Examine



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Defense
Witness # 1 Rodrigo de Triana, Seaman

As a member of Columbus's crew Rodrigo de Triana sketched various encounters between our Captain and the Amerindians. The defense would like to submit **Exhibit #4** as evidence and have the witness respond to the following questions.

1.
Did Columbus and his two friends give the impression of wanting to make friends with the inhabitants of this island?

2.
How did the natives greet the landing party coming from these ships? Are they coming forward, running away in fear or perhaps dancing.

3.
Does Columbus appear to be receiving gifts from the natives and does he have anything to return? What would this act of giving mean to both Amerindians and Europeans?

4.
Looking at the sketch, which is the dominant group - Europeans or Amerindians? Who is at the center - the most important person?

5.
Does this sketch indicate any hostile act by Columbus or his men against the Amerindians?

Exhibit #4 (1492 Discovery Invasion Encounter by Marvin Lunenfeld Pg 117 figure A-2).

Exhibit #5 (Bibliotheque Nationale - Madrid)

Prosecution Cross Examine

Defense
Witness #2 Amerindain

The voyage of Columbus resulted in Amerindains living a longer and better life due to the following contributions made by Columbus and those Europeans who soon followed:

Our diet now included wheat, barley, oranges, and sugar cane. In addition to cows, pigs, horses and chickens.

Beasts of burden were introduced to us by our Spanish visitors. Thus, our lives were made easier through the use of these animals. Also at this time steel tools were also introduced to us.

Our life expectancy increased as a direct result of these exchanges.

The missionaries helped the Indians.
Exhibit #6 (Converting the Indians Pg. 75) The Spanish Borderlands Frontier 1513-1821 By John Francis Bannon.

Prosecution Cross Examine

Defense
Witness #3 Father Francis

The process of conversion and the ensuing missionary system established by the Catholic Church benefitted Native Americans by bringing more civilized ways to their life. Some examples include:

1.
Indian girls were given the opportunity to become nuns.

2.
Life for the natives living in and around the missions varied with the nature of the Friar who was in charge but as a rule, the tasks were not too heavy. Overall life was quite easy enough to those who liked it.

Defense Witness #3 Father Francis Continued

3.

Although the neophyte found the requirements of steady round of duties of the mission far different from those which the wild and reckless habits of his former life made necessary. Under the discipline of the mission he must undergo a ceaseless round of religious, social, and industrial duties, which must have been severe indeed to one who had been accustomed to freedom and had never toiled except by accident. Much attention was given to religious affairs.
(Spanish Institutions of the Southwest by Frank W. Blackmar Pg 122).

Prosecution Cross Examine

Defense
Witness #4 Christopher Columbus

As soon as I reached the sea, I seized by force several Indians on the first island, in order that they might learn from us in a like manner tell us about those things in these lands of which they themselves had knowledge; and the plan succeeded, for a short time we understood them and they us, sometimes by gestures and signs, sometimes by words; and it was a great advantage to us. They came with me, always believing that I descended from heaven. Upon reaching shore, men, women and children laying aside fear visited us eagerly filling the road with a great crowd some bringing food, and some drink, with great love and extraordinary goodwill.

Prosecution Cross Examine

Prosecution Closing Statements- to be formulated by students.
Defense Closing Statements - to be formulated by students.

Judge's Charge to the Jury (See U.N Charter on Human Rights and Genocide) Use to establish the grounds by which the jury is to base its decision. Did Columbus violate any laws against humanity?

Verdict Rendered by the Jury - Jury Foreman's Remarks

DEBRIEF

120°
110°
100°
90°
80°
POLYCONIC PROJECTION
10° GRID
0 STATUTE MILES 500
40°
30°
PACIFIC OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SAN FRANCISCO
MONTEREY
LOS ANGELES
SAN DIEGO
ALTA CALIFORNIA
BAJA CALIFORNIA
Gulf of California
Camillares
Yuma
Mohave
Pai-Ute
Colorado
Ute
Hopi
Navaho
Supai
Yavapai
Pueblo
TAOS
SANTA FE
ALBUQUERQUE
NUEVO MÉXICO
Gila Apache
Pima
Pápago
TUCSON
Apache
Río Grande
EL PASO DEL NORTE
T E X A S
Comanche
Caddo
Red
Arkansas
Platte
Missouri
Mississippi
Ohio
SAINT LOUIS
KASKASKIA
NATCHITOCHES
LOS ADAES
Hasinai
MOBILE
PENSACOLA
Alabama
Apalachee
GUALE
SAN AGUSTÍN
NEW ORLEANS
Timucua
FLORIDA
GULF OF MEXICO
ARISPE
JANOS
NUEVA VIZCAYA
SONORA
Sería
Opata
Pima
CHIHUAHUA
Tarahumara
SAN ANTONIO
Bidai
COAHUILA
Conchos
SAN JUAN BAUTISTA
PARRAL
MONCLOVA
MONTERREY
SALTILLO
NUEVO SANTANDER
NUEVO LEÓN
LORETO
SAN FELIPE
Tepehuane
CULIACÁN
DURANGO
Chichimeca
TOWNS
PROVINCES
Indian Tribes
Water Features
WEST INDIES NOT SHOWN
THE SPANISH BORDERLANDS

EXHIBIT #1

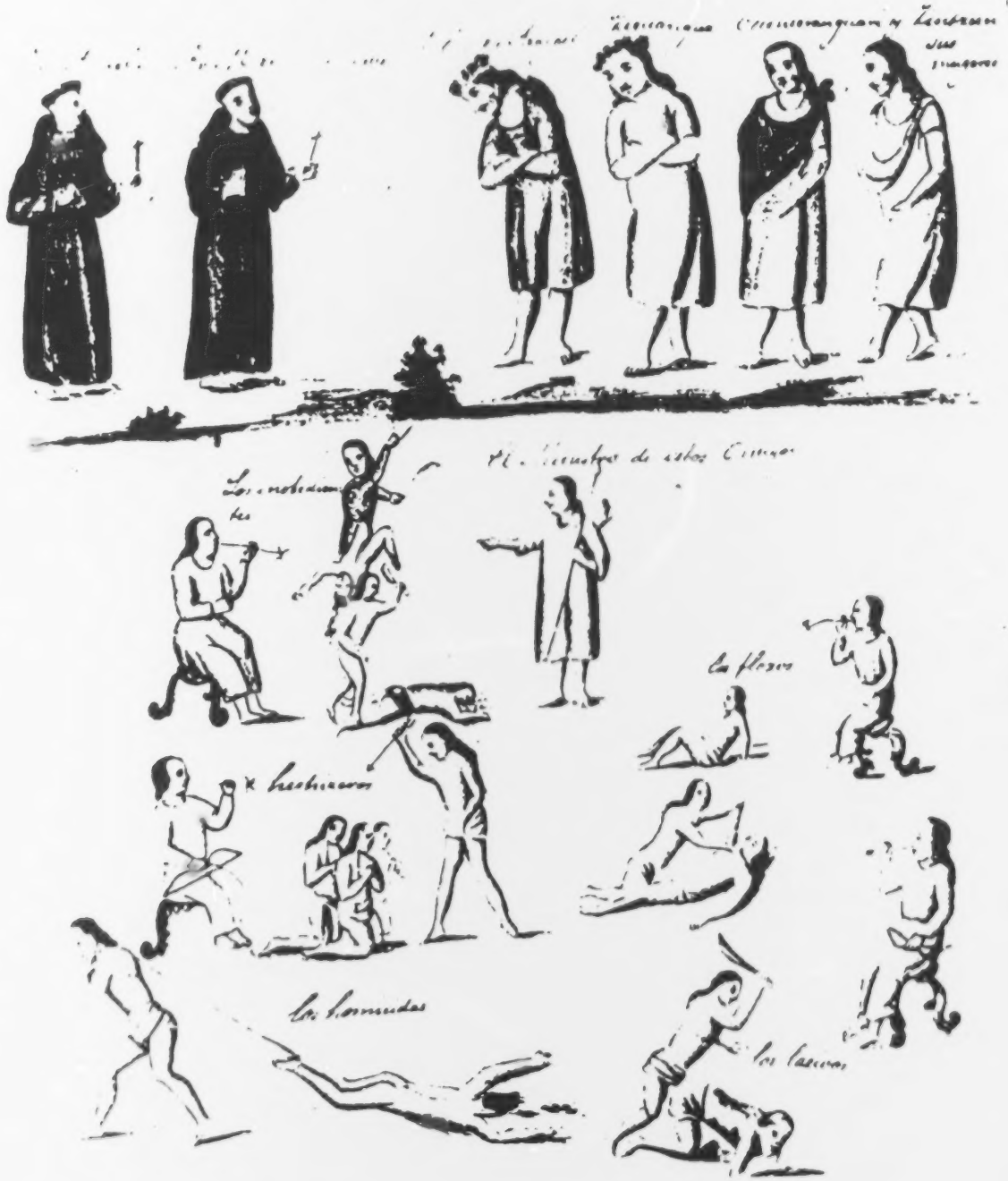

EXHIBIT #2

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EXHIBIT #3

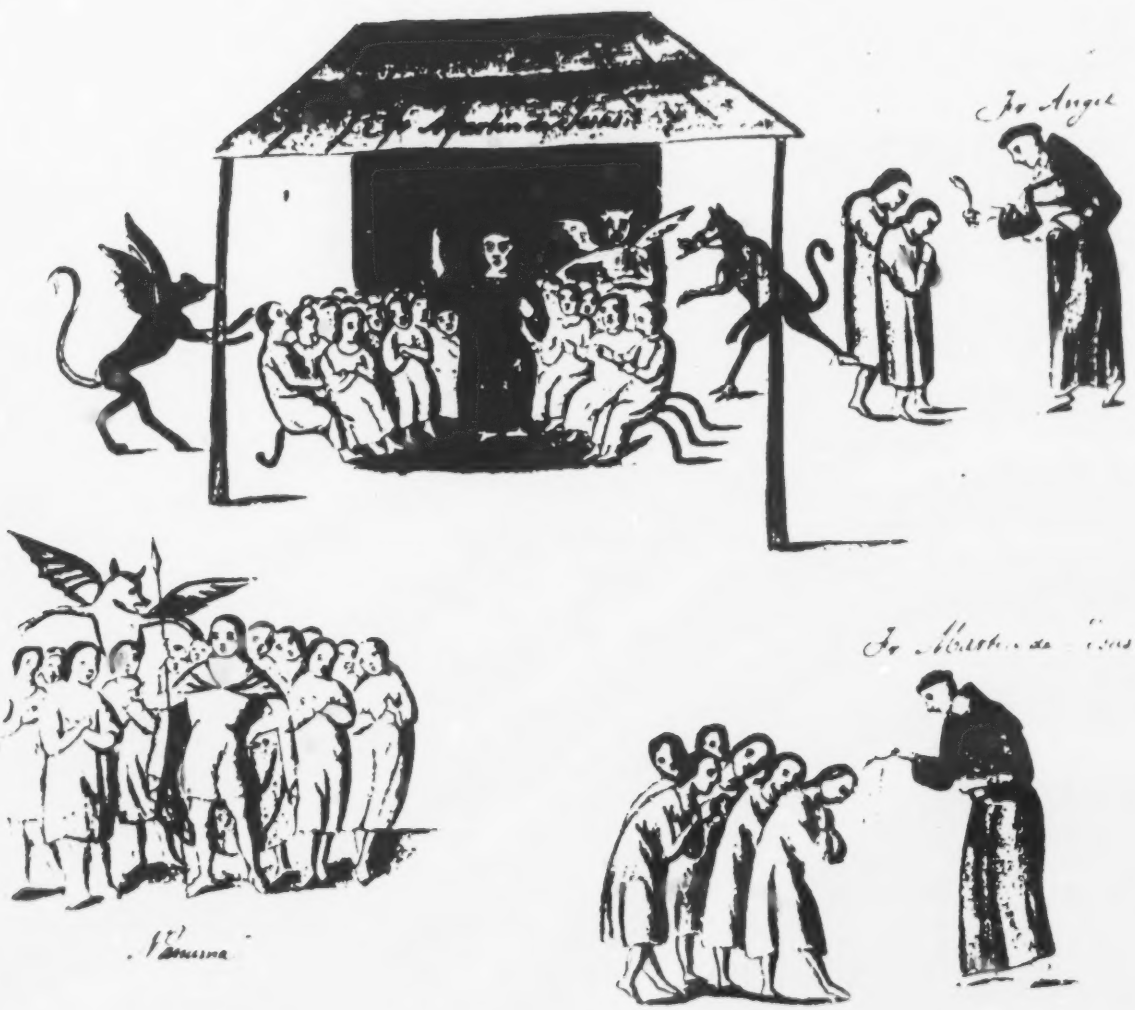

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EXHIBIT #4

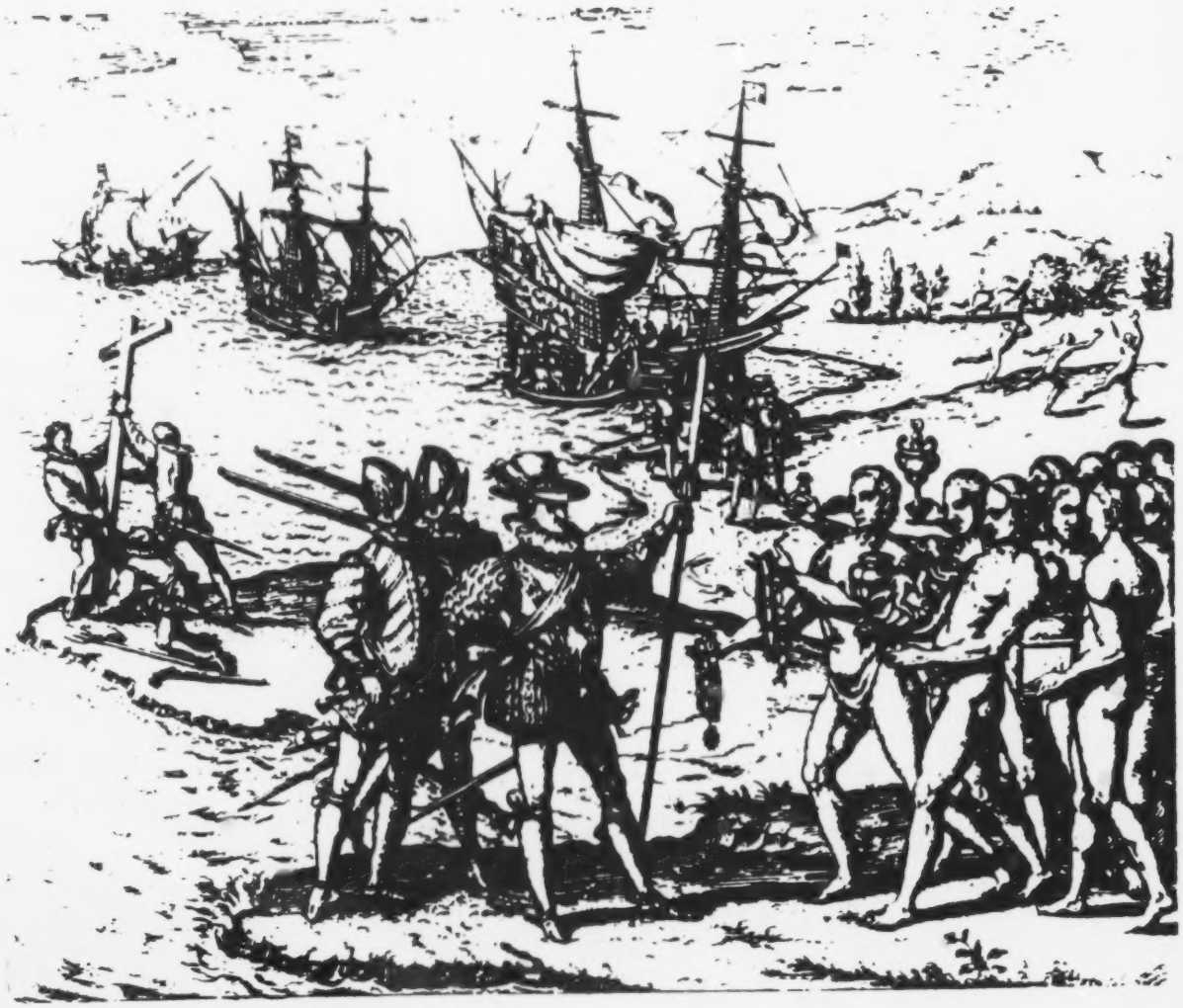

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EXHIBIT #5

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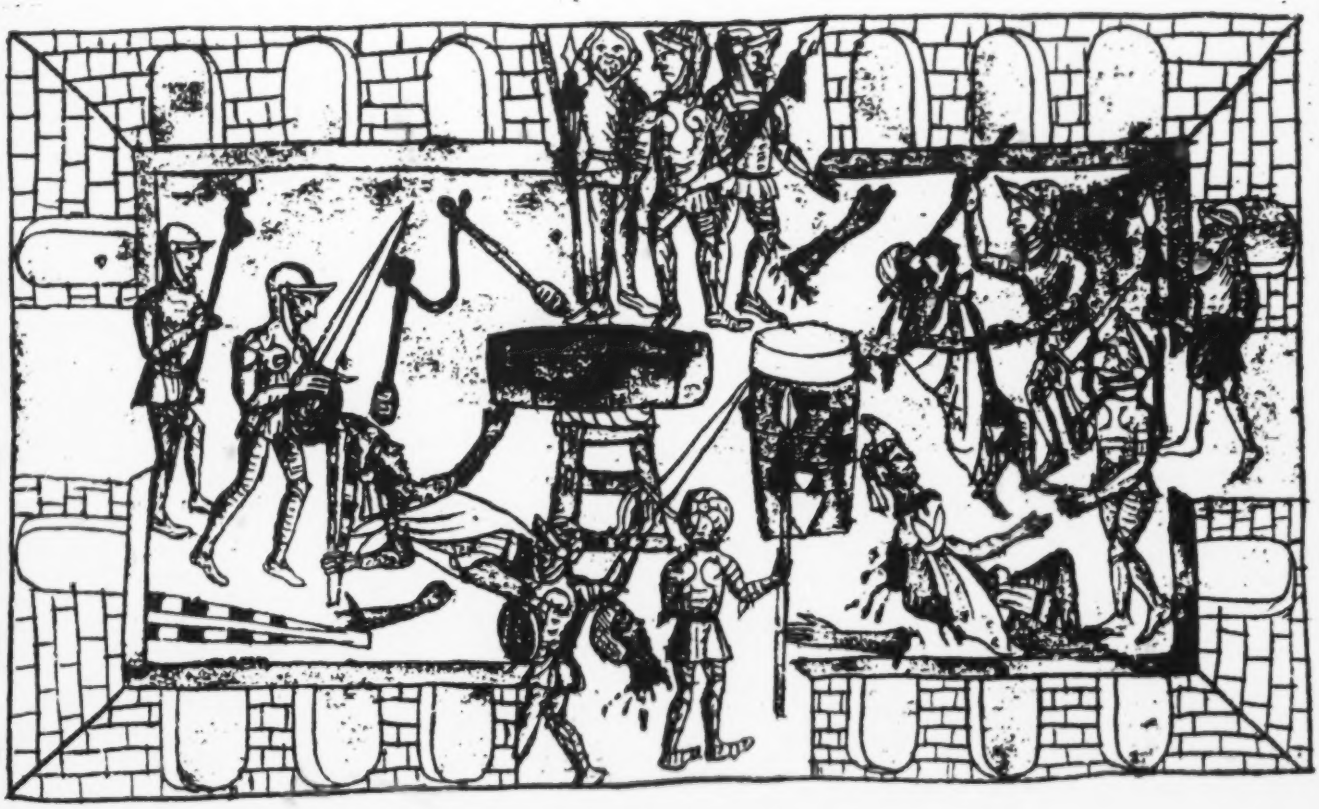
EXHIBIT #6



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You Are There: The Trial of Christopher Columbus

POSITION PAPER

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- formulate ideas relating to Columbus into a position paper (Synthesis)

PROCEDURE:

1. Hand out information sheet and orally read with class. Discussion.
2. Discuss with students requirements for position paper - Columbus: Friend or Foe.

MATERIALS:

Requirement sheet for position paper

EXTENSION:

Encourage students to include bibliography page and art work.
Encourage students to write the opposite point of view paper.

NAME_____

DATE_____

POSITION PAPER REQUIREMENTS

1. Title of position paper - "Columbus: Friend of Foe"

2. To be graded on the following point system:
   25 format - indenting, paragraph and sentence structure
   25 spelling
   50 content

3. Length - two, double spaced word processed pages.

4. Due _____

5. Extra Credit
   Bibliography page
   Art Work
   Write the opposite point of view paper

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bannon, John Francis. The Spanish Borderlands 1513-1821 Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press 1974.
This book contained numerous illustrations dealing with the contact between the Spanish explorers and various indian tribes of the southwest. This book provided accounts of the Spanish missioniares in New Mexico.

Bannon, John Francis. The Spanish Conquistadores: Men or Devils ? New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston 1960.
This Book was used to describe actual descriptions of the early conquistadores. It was the basis for the first prosecution witness in this mock trial.

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This book provided an entire chapter dealing with the organization and structure of the Spanish missions in the southwest.

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Gives earliest information of this great discovery various editions and translations were printed of Columbus' Letter to the royal treasurer and secretary of the exchequer. Only a few of these, however, have come down to our times, and they are reckoned among the rarest and most expensive of books.

Crosby, Alfred W., Jr. The Columbian Exchange Westport: Greenwood Press, 51 Riverside Avenue, Westport, Connecticut 06880. 1972.
This book gives types of plants that were exchanged between the "Old and New Worlds." Also it includes information about growing seasons and climates. Pages 74 begins an explaination of animal exchanges.

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De Heri, Don and Moholy, Noeland. Junipero Serra Sanfranciso, California: Harper and Row Publishers 1985.
This book was used to trace the impact that the Spanish mission system had upon the Indians of California.

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This book described some the myths that have been associated with the missions of New Mexico. It was used to point out the impact of the Church upon Indian culture.

Forrst, Earl R. Missions and Pueblos of the Southwest. Glorieta, New Mexico. Rio Grande Press, Inc. 1929.
This book contains numerios photos of famous missions located in the southwest. It was used to describe the relationship between the missionaries and the Pueblo Indians.

Gutierrez, Ramon A. When Jesus Came, the Cornmothers Went Away. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991.
This book was used to indicate the Indian point of view concerning the Spanish encounter. It examines the Spanish conquest of America and its impact on a group of indigenous peoples.

Hackett, Charles. Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest 1680-1682. Albuquerque, New Mexico. University of New Mexico Press. 1942.
This book contains primary source documents concerning reasons for the Indians revolt against the Spanish. It provided insight into the overall treatment of the Indians by the Spanish crown.

Hallenback, Clere. Spanish Missions of the Old Southwest. New York. Doubleday Page and Company. 1926.
This book provides map illustrations concerning the extent of Spanish involvement in the southwest.

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This book provides information on trade.

Bibliography Continued

Jones, Oakah. The Spanish Borderlands. Los Angeles, California. Lorrin L. Morrison Publisher. 1974.
This book provided a connection between missions in California and missions in the southwest.

Kessell, John. Kiva, Cross and Crown. Albuquerque, New Mexico. University of New Mexico Press. 1990.
This book proved to be an excellent source for the graphics that appear in this mock trial. It also contains short excerpts from primary sources dealing with the Spanish Indian relationship in New Mexico.

Las Casas, Bartholomew. The Log of Christopher Columbus. New York. William R. Scott. 1938.
This information is an account of all the first voyage noting the happenings from day-to- day. It was copied in brief by a companion of Christopher Columbus.

Lunenfeld, Marvin. 1492 Discovery Invasion Encounter. D.C. Heath and Company. Lexington, Massachusetts. 1991.
Good information on Columbus' first voyage.

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This book gives information from the first voyage.

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Excellent article with color graphics.